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Dirty subway, lifts that fail, pickets

Day-by-day report on Soviet editors' tour of the U.S.A.

By Nicholas Daniloff
United Press International

January 19—I met the delegation at John F. Kennedy Airport with Ross N. Lavroff, the Russian-English interpreter. In the group, besides Lev N. Tolkunov, the top editor of the Soviet government newspaper, *Izvestia*, there are A. I. Lukovets, deputy chief editor of the Communist Party newspaper *Pravda*; Enver E. Mamedov, first deputy chairman of the Soviet Radio and Television Committee; P. F. Alexeyev, chief editor of *Selskaya Zhizn* (*Rural Life*), a daily with a circulation of nearly eight million.

There are also Prof. A. I. Yakovlev, member of the editorial board of the Communist Party theoretical journal *Kommunist*; Yuhana M. Yurna, editor of *Soviet Estonia*; G. O. Zimanas, editor of the newspaper *Tijesa* in Soviet Lithuania; I. S. Gagarin, editor of *Uralsky Rabochii* (*Ural Worker*); A. K. Ryabolkyach, editor of *Soviet Ukraine*; Gans A. Vladimirovsky of the *Moscow News* and the delegation's own interpreter; Igor A. Geyevsky, a writer for the *Journal of the Institute of the United States* recently established in Moscow.

The visit begins with a jolt. Delegation chief Tolkunov tells

For 18 days, January 19 to February 5, a group of 11 Soviet editors toured the United States as guests of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. At the request of the ASNE, Nicholas Daniloff, a Washington reporter for United Press International who speaks Russian and had previously served in Moscow, escorted the visitors. He presents here a diary of the trip, including some of his own impressions.

chief American host, Norman Isaacs, president of ASNE, that the 23-day program must be compressed to 18 days. This is because the visit which ASNE editors paid to Russia last fall was 18 days long. Isaacs grimaces but masterfully reforms the program, dropping a visit to *Playboy* magazine's publisher, Hugh Hefner, and Oklahoma City. "Look how he wields that blue pencil," says one Russian. "That's the mark of a true editor."

January 21—"Business before pleasure," that's the motto of the delegation as we begin a heavy program of appointments. We lunch at Associated Press

headquarters and allow 45 minutes to go by subway to City Hall for an appointment with Mayor Lindsay. It is bitter cold. The train is delayed 22 minutes. The Russians, who are proud of the efficient and sometimes sumptuous Moscow subway system, are clearly uncomfortable in the dank, dirty New York station. They inquire politely when the New York subway was started. They are interested but hardly cheered to learn that tunnelling began at the end of the 19th century.

We arrive 15 minutes late. Lindsay, himself, is 30 minutes late. "Not late," suggests one Russian diplomatically, "he just got held up." Lindsay makes a good impression on the Russian guests; his "beautiful person" charm works. But he fosters a certain skepticism when he claims that a New Yorker can get to work on the subway in 15-20 minutes. Driving a group of us back to the hotel, Lindsay's chauffeur candidly describes the decay of New York. He says not enough money is being spent on the city. The Russians appreciate that kind of candor.

Stuck twice in elevators

January 22—Chicago. We overload the elevator and get stuck on the way up to see Mayor Daley. It's a supreme irony—people always used to quip that the Russians could operate spaceships but could not build elevators. It seems hours before we get unstuck. Some of the delegation members have heart conditions and painful infirmities stemming from World War II wounds. We suffer in silence; but we suffer, nevertheless. That's clear from the sweat on the brows and the anguished expressions. We are finally rescued and immediately confront Daley. The Mayor gives his answers about the Chicago troubles of 1968; substandard housing, racial strife. The Russians make it quite clear to me that they are not impressed, or, if they are impressed, it is negatively. "He's obfuscating and evading the issue," one of them says.

On the way to lunch at the *Chicago Tribune*, the unthinkable happens again. We get



Lev N. Tolkunov, chief editor of *Izvestia*, admires a lamb on the Gavin McKerrow farm in Wisconsin.

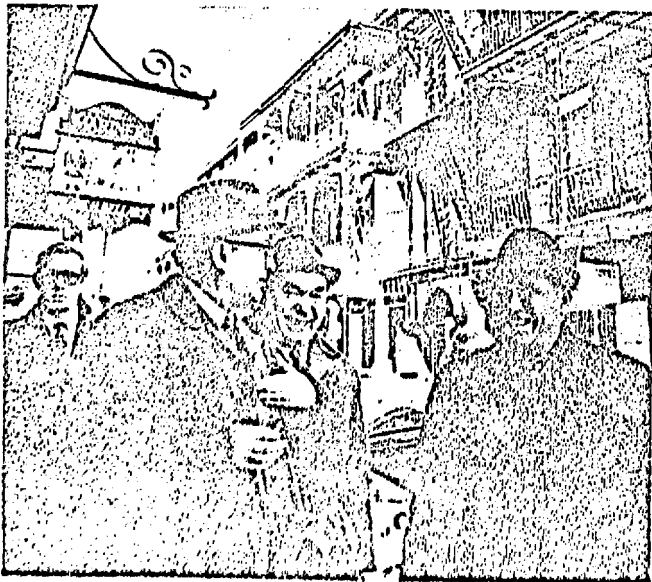
stuck a second time in an elevator. It seems too much. "If this happened in our country, I would fire everybody who had anything to do with the elevators," one of the editors blurts out. I think, at first, that he is joking. But then I realize he isn't. He is deadly serious.

It's Tolkunov's 51st birthday. Members of the Soviet delegation tell me that they want to get him a surprise present. I wrack my brains for a way to produce a gift. Then at a reception given by the *Chicago Sun Times* and the *Chicago Daily News*, I get my chance. With the permission of the hosts, I commandeer a floral arrangement and turn it into a bouquet. We raise a toast to *Izvestia's* chief editor. He beams with delight.

Smooth train ride

January 23—We take our first train trip. To Milwaukee. The train is clean, smooth, on time. We are whisked by bus to a meeting with the youthful-looking Mayor of Milwaukee, Henry W. Maier. Tolkunov asks the Mayor his age. "I'm 51," he answers and a common bond is forged. The Russians are impressed by the industriousness of Milwaukee, its leaders and its citizens. They wish them success in their declared goal of becoming "the greatest city in the world."

In the afternoon we visit a one-family cattle farm owned by Gavin McKerrow at Pewaukee, Wis. Alexeyev asks innumerable technical agricultural questions; Tolkunov cradles a lamb for a persistent photographer; several other Russians pose with the farmer's college-age niece. Then off to a nearby cooperative dairy plant. The Russians get plenty



The Soviet journalists on a walking tour of the French Quarter in New Orleans.

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